

**MINUTES OF THE KENNEL CLUB OBEDIENCE LIAISON COUNCIL**  
**MEETING HELD AT 11.00 AM ON 21 JANUARY 2015**

**PRESENT:**

Mrs A Benoist	North East
Mr D Garrett	Wales
Miss F Godfrey	South East and East Anglia
Mr R Harlow	South East and East Anglia (up to item 7)
Mrs S Henstridge	South and South West
Mrs J Jessop	Wales
Mr A Kousourou	Scotland
Mrs D Lavender	North East
Mr P Lubbi	South East and East Anglia
Mr M McCartney	Northern Ireland
Mr J McIntosh	Scotland
Mr R Page	Midlands
Mr S Rutter	North West
Mrs B Smith	Midlands
Mrs L Turner	South and South West

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Miss D Deuchar	Manager – Canine Activities Team
Mrs C Maguire	Specialist – Working Dog Activities Team
Mrs A Mitchell	Committee Secretary – Working Dog Activities Team

**IN THE CHAIR:**

Mr S Rutter

**ITEM 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1. Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs A Height and Mrs M Ray.

**ITEM 2. RESIGNATION OF MR R WAKELIN**

2. The Council noted that, with regret, Mr R Wakelin had tendered his resignation as a Representative for the North West. The Chairman confirmed that the General Committee had approved Mrs Ann Height as his replacement. Unfortunately Mrs Height was unable to attend the meeting but would be welcomed at the next meeting.

**ITEM 3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

3. The minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2014 were signed by the Chairman as an accurate record.

## **ITEM 4. MATTERS ARISING/RESULTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

### Amendments to Regulations

4. The Council noted that the General Committee had approved amendments to the following Regulations which had been recommended for approval by the Council at its meeting on 1 July 2014:
  - (i) Regulation G35.g – use of food and toys in Introductory and Special classes
  - (ii) Regulation G(C)4.f.(1) Sit Stay – marking of minor movements during Sit Stay
  - (iii) Regulation G(C)4.f.(2) Down Stay – marking of minor movements during Down Stay
  - (iv) Regulation G(A)5. – Introductory class
  - (v) Regulation G(C)4. – Tests
  - (vi) Regulation G(C)4.g.(9) – Scent Discrimination
  - (vii) Regulation G(C)4.h.(1) – Send Away, Drop and Recall

### Regulation G(C)1.d.

5. The Council was advised that the Activities Sub-Committee at its meeting of 4 September 2014 had noted the amendment proposed by the Council but considered that this Regulation had been replaced by other changes and did not need to be re-inserted.

### Activities Health & Welfare Sub-Group

6. The General Committee had approved the Council's recommendation that Mr R Harlow join the Activities Health & Welfare Sub-Group as an Obedience representative.

### Beginners Guide to Obedience

7. The Council considered the revised Beginners Guide to Obedience booklet, and a number of minor amendments were agreed. It was accepted that the booklet should contain a reference to the value of joining a club and this would be added to the introductory section.
8. All concerned were thanked for their work on the booklet which was considered to be an attractive and useful document. The Guide, when finalised, would be mainly issued as a downloadable version available from the Kennel Club's website, but a limited number of printed hard copies would also be available.

### Listed Status

9. The Council was advised that the Activities Sub-Committee had noted the Council's recommendation that Listed Status clubs should be permitted to hold Open Shows on an unrestricted basis. It acknowledged the Council's concern regarding non-registered clubs which operated on a 'for profit' basis and that a high number of shows run by such clubs could be to the detriment of registered clubs.

### Reduction of stay times

10. The Activities Sub-Committee had been requested by the Council to reconsider its decision, made at its meeting of 20 March 2014, not to recommend for

approval the proposal to amend Regulations G(A)10.b. Class B and Regulation G(A)11.d Class C which related to the reduction of stay times.

11. The Council noted that the Sub-Committee had acknowledged the Council's strong views on the issue but had confirmed its original view that there was not a sufficiently strong case for the reduction of stay times and accordingly it did not recommend the proposed amendment for approval.
12. The Council acknowledged that the Sub-Committee's decision had been based on a lack of evidence to support the proposal. It accepted that it would not be possible to submit a similar proposal for another two years but acknowledged that should it wish to do so, it would be necessary for it to provide strong and factual evidence to support its case. Mr Rutter volunteered to begin assembling information which would include items such as details of the times at which dogs broke stays, and incidents occurring in or around the stay ring.
13. This led to a discussion regarding the definition of an 'incident'. The office confirmed that anything out of the ordinary occurring at a show must be reported as a part of the incident report, whether or not it had been resolved on the day and regardless of whether or not a formal objection had been made. This would allow the office to provide factual information regarding the frequency and types of incidents occurring at shows which could if necessary be used to support recommendations made by the Council.
14. It was noted that responsibility for providing the incident report lay with club secretaries, and it was therefore essential that Chief Stewards communicated well with secretaries to make them aware of any incidents occurring during the course of a show.
15. There was some discussion regarding the size of stay rings and whether there was a welfare and safety issue if they were too small and dogs were as a result too close together. It was accepted that it was not advisable to be too prescriptive and that it was up to the Chief Steward at a show to ensure that the ring used for stays was of an appropriate size, bearing in mind the number of dogs taking part. If a competitor considered that a stay ring was too small, a report should be lodged with the secretary.
16. It was also emphasised that dogs taking part in stay exercises should be under control at all times, including when entering and exiting the ring.

#### **ITEM 5. CANINE ACTIVITIES IT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

17. The Council received a presentation from Mr Thomas on behalf of the office regarding proposed IT improvements for Canine Activities.
18. It was confirmed that, although the improvements included provision for many submissions to be made online, all paper processes would still be supported for those without online facilities.

19. The Council was also advised that there would be no changes to procedures regarding applications for show dates or licences, but only to the application processes. For example, the 100 mile policy regarding shows on the same date would still apply. However, there was an intention to review the requirement for licence applications to be made six months before the show date so as to allow clubs to apply for additional licences at short notice subject to available space within the show calendar.
20. The Council was assured that show secretaries would be invited to attend workshops at which the developments to the IT system would be tested prior to going live.
21. Mr Thomas was thanked for his informative presentation.

#### **ITEM 6. FIVE YEAR STRATEGY**

22. The Council discussed the Five Year Strategic Plan.
23. It was noted that the Beginners Guide to Obedience had been signed off earlier in the meeting. In respect of the item relating to contacting participants in Gold Good Citizen Dog scheme to introduce them to competitive obedience, it was hoped that this could be achieved in the near future now that the Guide, which was to form part of the information pack to be sent out, had been approved.
24. The issue of commentary for obedience competitions at Crufts was discussed. Commentary for the Inter-Regional and World Cup events had been well received and it did not appear that competitors or judges had found it to be intrusive or distracting. In the light of this, the Council, although initially of the view that it would not be appropriate, would now support the introduction of commentary for the Championships, provided that competitors were advised in advance that this would be the case. However it accepted that it would not be feasible for it to take place at Crufts in 2015. It agreed that a firm proposal would be discussed at its June meeting when there had been an opportunity to gauge the opinions of the obedience community.
25. A query was raised as to whether there were plans to clarify details of the Inter-Regional competition at Crufts as at present some people found this quite confusing in regard to which counties were included within each region. However it was noted that this was a matter for the Crufts Sub-Committee and not for Council.
26. In respect of Council engagement with grass-roots competitors, it was emphasised that holding area meetings was not essential but that all representatives were required to collect feedback from those in their area. There had been a good response to meetings held at shows but in some areas it proved difficult to encourage attendance at area meetings. Miss Godfrey had held an online meeting which had been very productive but it was acknowledged that most representatives would not have access to the appropriate software to allow them to do this.

## **ITEM 7. PROPOSALS**

### Proposed amendment to Regulation G33.d Judges and Judging

27. Mrs Turner introduced the item on behalf of Mr R Becque, who requested that the Council consider an amendment to the above Regulation which would allow for dogs owned or part owned by a judge to be entered at shows where the owner (or co-owner) was judging. Many dogs were co-owned for practical reasons and Mr Becque considered that it was unnecessary to prevent such dogs being entered at a show where a co-owner was judging, as in his view judging of Obedience competitions was not subjective in nature and that due to the number of judges officiating at any one show there was no opportunity for a judge judging one class to influence judging in another class. The proposal was seconded by Mrs Henstridge.
28. It was accepted that a handler should not enter in the class being judged by their partner or relative and it was noted that Regulation G37(10) stated that a dog may be disqualified by the General Committee from an award if it had been handled in the class by the scheduled judge's spouse, immediate family, or was resident at the same address as the scheduled judge.
29. The Council agreed that one judge at a show could not influence the decisions of another and therefore accepted that the proposal was a reasonable one in that it would allow the partner of a judge to enter his or her own dog even if it was co-owned with the judge. However there were concerns that it would also allow for a judge to enter his or her own dog provided he or she did not handle it, and the Council's view was that this would not be acceptable.
30. It was highlighted that there were regulations in place for other disciplines which prevented judges entering their own dogs at shows at which they were judging. It was also noted that the Kennel Club could only consider issues relating to Kennel Club registration of a dog and not its legal ownership.
31. The Council agreed that the original proposal was unclear as to exactly what was intended and it was agreed that it would be referred back to Mr Becque for clarification. The issue would be considered again at the Council's meeting in June 2015.

### Proposed amendment to G(C)4.h – Stays

32. Mr Page introduced the proposal on behalf of Ms A Neal. Ms Neal wished to propose that stays for Championship Class C should take place when all competitors in the class had completed ring work exercises, but allowing 15 minutes after the last dog had worked. The intention of the amendment was to ensure fairness for all competitors in the class. Ms Neal was of the view that having timed stays was disruptive to the smooth flow of the running order and that they were also unfair on a competitor who had just finished the ring work and must do stays when the dog may be tired. Timed stays in other classes would still take priority. The proposal was seconded by Mrs Turner.
33. The Council did not accept the view that a dog taking part in stays immediately after completing ring work would be tired and therefore at a disadvantage. It was

expected that judges would manage their rings so that dogs would not be placed in a position of going straight from ring work into the stay ring with no interval. It was not considered that timed stays would be disruptive to the running order.

34. There were also concerns that scheduling stays after all ring work had been completed may result in them being held very late, which would be inconvenient for show organisers, and may lead to only those competitors still in contention for awards wishing to complete stays. The Council was also of the view that most handlers would prefer to know in advance when stays would take place.
35. It also noted that the proposal related only to Championship Class C. Although the Council acknowledged that a strict running order was applicable throughout this class which meant that handlers had no choice as to when to work their dogs, it did not consider that any special provision relating to stays should be made for Championship Class C.
36. A vote took place and the proposal was not supported.

#### **ITEM 8. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

##### Training rounds in Championship Class C

37. Mrs Turner spoke on behalf of Mr H Watson. Mr Watson requested that the Council discuss the issue of training rounds in Championship Class C. Mr Watson's view was that these were not acceptable in this class which was at the highest level of Obedience competition, and which should be a display of the dedication and skill of both handlers and dogs to the competitive obedience world and to the public. Mr Watson was also concerned that a handler requesting the judge to cease marking but wishing to remain in the ring may have a detrimental effect on the concentration of the judge and the steward, and had an adverse effect on the overall flow of the day for all concerned.
38. It was noted that practice rounds were permissible at the discretion of the judge but that the competitor may only practice those exercises that are set out in the Regulations for the class in which he or she was entered, and that a practice round should take no longer than a marked round.
39. The Council did not consider that there were an excessive number of practice rounds in Championship Class C and that where these did occur, the competitor would often wish to repeat just one exercise before withdrawing and that there was no negative impact on the time taken. The Council understood Mr Watson's concerns but was of the view that there was no necessity to legislate on the matter and that practice rounds should remain at the discretion of the judge.

#### **ITEM 9. ACTIVITIES HEALTH & WELFARE SUB-GROUP**

40. The Council noted the written report from Mr Harlow on the recent work of the Activities Health and Welfare Sub-Group.

41. It was noted that the Obedience questionnaire had not indicated any particular health issues which needed to be addressed and in view of this lack of evidence it was noted that the Sub-Group was not planning any further action.
42. The Council's view was that there may be a health and welfare issue arising from the length of stay times but accepted that there was provision for these to be reduced in the event of adverse weather conditions. It also considered that it may be necessary in future to consider whether there was any long-term impact on the health of dogs relating to head carriage, but it accepted that evidence would be required in order to ascertain whether there was any such issue.
43. It was acknowledged that, in the case of a dog which had received an injury, it was not always clear whether the injury had occurred as a result of competing in Obedience, in training, or in day to day activities. It was noted that the Activities Health and Welfare Sub-Group was considering carrying out a survey of pet dogs which did not take part in any Kennel Club discipline, which could be used for comparison purposes.
44. It was also accepted that some injuries were identified in competing dogs which may have remained undiagnosed in a pet dog.

Kennel Club Code of Practice for Owners and Handlers with Dogs Taking Part in Canine Activities

45. The Council noted the above document which had been approved by the General Committee. The document was aimed at anyone participating in canine activities and was to be distributed as widely as possible so as to reach the maximum number of people.
46. It was noted that although the Code was stated to be voluntary, Kennel Club Regulations stated that those taking part in Kennel Club licensed/approved events were expected to maintain and abide by the highest standards, in accordance with Kennel Club Rules and Regulations and appropriate Codes of Conduct. This represented a contradiction which would be clarified in due course.
47. It was confirmed that the section relating to 'doping of dogs to enhance performance and the use of medication to mask injuries' included the use of prescribed painkilling and anti-inflammatory drugs. Dogs competing should be fit to do so and should not be competing if the use of painkilling or anti-inflammatory drugs was required.
48. In response to a query, it was clarified that it was not essential that dog training instructors should have KCAI accreditation, but they should have suitable levels of experience enabling them to act as instructors.
49. The Council noted that it was expected that Codes of Practice represented minimum standards to which all parties should conform.

## **ITEM 10. JUDGES WORKING PARTY**

50. The Council noted a report from Mrs Garner on the Judges Working Party following its meeting on 11 November 2014.
51. It was noted that a formal process for mentoring new judges was being developed for Agility. There were no current plans at present for Obedience to develop a similar system but the Council agreed that this may be an issue warranting further discussion in the future.
52. Noting that Obedience judges were required to have attended a Kennel Club Obedience Regulations and Judging Procedure Seminar and to have passed the Regulations and Judging Procedure examination, and to have attended an Obedience Test Design and the Practice of Judging Seminar (effective from 1 January 2015), the Council wished to encourage Accredited Trainers to run as many seminars as possible. Where there was a high level of demand, clubs were encouraged to make contact with an Accredited Trainer to request that a seminar be run especially for them. A list of Accredited Trainers was available from the Kennel Club's website.
53. If brought to the Kennel Club's attention, judges not fulfilling the above requirement would be referred to the Activities Sub-Committee.
54. The Council expressed a concern that not all judges would be aware of the above requirement. The office agreed to issue a further Press Release as a reminder.

### Obedience Representative

55. The Council noted that the General Committee had approved the recommendation from the Judges Working Party that Mrs Garner should remain one of its representatives for Obedience following her resignation from the Obedience Liaison Council. The General Committee had also approved the appointment of Mr Rutter as a member of the Judges Working Party.

## **ITEM 11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### Retrieve over hurdle

56. An email had been received from Ms K Reynolds expressing concern at the use of a solid hurdle in the retrieve over hurdle exercise in the Obedience World Cup and the Inter-Regional competitions held at Crufts. Ms Reynolds was of the view that the hurdle at Crufts was a solid object, unlike hurdles used in agility competitions, and that it presented a potential for injury to dogs during competition and during training. It was alleged that at a recent training session the hurdle had been set up on a slippery floor.
57. The Council accepted that the value of the hurdle was in its demonstration of the dog's ability to carry out a retrieve over a hurdle and that it was not comparable to an agility jump in that in Obedience competition, dogs were not required to execute the hurdle at speed. The hurdle was not considered to be unduly high and it was believed that it should be within the ability of any fit dog. However the

Council accepted that because the hurdle was not used in any competitions other than the World Cup and the Inter-Regional competition, there may be some issue with competitors who were unfamiliar with the best way to train their dogs for it.

58. It was accepted that the use of the hurdle did not fall within the remit of the Council but Mrs Reynold's concerns were acknowledged and it was agreed that the matter should be referred to the Crufts Sub-Committee for further consideration.

#### Obedience Information Stand at Crufts

59. Mr Rutter had run the stand at Crufts last year but was unable to do so this year. Volunteers were requested to provide assistance in manning the stand, which would provide information for the public in respect of events taking place in the Obedience ring, together with advice as to how to get involved in Obedience. It would also provide information such as schedules of Crufts events and details of competitors and results. The stand would be set up on Thursday morning. Those offering to help would receive free entry tickets for Crufts on the day on which they manned the stand. Mrs Turner would be able to help on Saturday but due to other commitments would be unable to carry out preparatory work such as collection and collation of information regarding competitors taking part in the Inter-Regional and World Cup competitions. It was noted that it should be possible to obtain this information from Dog Training Weekly.
60. The office confirmed that the Kennel Club would provide furniture and screens together with information such as printed listings of show dates and training clubs, and Beginners Guides. This information would be delivered to the stand.
61. Mrs Benoist and Mrs Lavender offered to take charge of running the stand, and were thanked for doing so.

#### Obedience newsletter

62. The office was thanked for producing the newsletter which had been of a very high standard. The intention was to produce two issues each year but it was proving quite difficult to source adequate content. Council representatives and all Obedience competitors were invited to submit comments and suggestions for future issues via email to [obedience@thekennelclub.org.uk](mailto:obedience@thekennelclub.org.uk)

### **ITEM 12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

63. The date of the next meeting of the Council would take place on 30 June 2015 and any items for the agenda must be submitted by 1 April 2015.
64. There being no further business, the meeting closed at 15.55 p.m.

**S RUTTER**  
**Chairman**

## THE KENNEL CLUB'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

**“To raise the relevance of the Kennel Club in the eyes of the public at large, dog owners and those who take part in canine events, so as to be better able ‘*to promote in every way the general improvement of dogs.*’ This objective to be achieved through:-**

- **Ensuring that the Kennel Club is the first port of call on all canine matters.**
- **Improving canine health and welfare.**
- **Popularising canine events focusing on the retention of existing participants and the attracting of new.**
- **Achieving a widening of the Kennel Club membership base.**
- **Encouraging the development of all those concerned with dogs through education and training.**
- **Encouraging more people to provide input in the Kennel Club’s decision making process.**

# Kennel Club Obedience Liaison Council Representatives

1 January 2013 to 31 December 2015

**Midlands**, Ms B Smith, 99 Highfields Road,  
Chasetown, Staffs, WS7 4QS, Tel: 01543 674238,  
Email: [beverley.j.smith@bt.com](mailto:beverley.j.smith@bt.com)

**Midlands**, Mr R Page, 2 The Glade, Shoal Hill,  
Cannock, Staffs, WS11 1JH, Tel: 01543 505820,  
Email:  
[shelaghandroy@showprinting.freeseerve.co.uk](mailto:shelaghandroy@showprinting.freeseerve.co.uk)

**Midlands**, Mrs M Ray, 13 Helmdon Close, Rugby,  
Warks, CV21 1RS, Tel: 01788 561253,  
Email: [draped@aol.com](mailto:draped@aol.com)

**North East**, Miss A Benoist, 43 Canterbury Way  
Wideopen, Newcastle upon Tyne NE13 6JH, Tel:  
07702 469743, Email: [girlsplusone@yahoo.com](mailto:girlsplusone@yahoo.com)

**North East**, Mrs D Lavender, 63 Weetshaw Close,  
Shafton, Nr Barnsley, S72 8PZ, Tel: 01226  
715980, Email: [debralavender60@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:debralavender60@yahoo.co.uk)

**North West**, Mr S Rutter, Galgate, 80 Long Lane,  
Orford, Warrington, Cheshire, WA2 8PX, Tel:  
01925 656175, Email: [steve.rutter@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:steve.rutter@tiscali.co.uk)

**North West**, Mrs A Height  
Tel: 01942 867010, email [annpete2@sky.com](mailto:annpete2@sky.com)

**Northern Ireland**, Mr M McCartney, Glen-Craig,  
28 Moneybroom Road, Lisburn, Co. Antrim, BT28  
2QP, Tel: 028 9262 2992,  
Email: [glencraigdogs@hotmail.com](mailto:glencraigdogs@hotmail.com)

**Scotland**, Mr A Kousourou, Actim, 8 Powburn  
Crescent, Kylepark, Uddingston, S Lanarkshire,  
G71 7SS Tel: 01698 813817,  
Email: [andrew.kousourou@virginmedia.com](mailto:andrew.kousourou@virginmedia.com)

**Scotland**, Mr J McIntosh, 45 Shawstonfoot Road,  
Bellside, Cleland, Lanarkshire ML1 5NY, Tel:  
01698 860358  
Email: [macintosh-james@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:macintosh-james@hotmail.co.uk)

**South & South West**, Mrs S Henstridge, 104 The  
Crescent, Andover, Hampshire, SP10 3BN, Tel:  
01264 360257, Email: [stellazhivi@aol.com](mailto:stellazhivi@aol.com)

**South & South West**, Mrs L Turner, The  
Bungalow, 25 Sandys Close, Basingstoke, RG22  
6AR Tel: 01256 816388  
Email: [lilian.doghouse25@btinternet.com](mailto:lilian.doghouse25@btinternet.com)

**South East & East Anglia**, Mr R Harlow,  
Starhaven, Sundridge Road, Chevening,  
Sevenoaks, Kent TN14 6HB, Tel: 01732 462216,  
Email: [rharlow@btconnect.com](mailto:rharlow@btconnect.com)

**South East & East Anglia**, Mr P Lubbi, Layash,  
2 Celia Crescent, Ashford, Middlesex, TW15  
3NW, Tel: 01784 258334,  
Email: [layash2@aol.com](mailto:layash2@aol.com)

**South East & East Anglia**, Miss F Godfrey, 25  
Kevington Drive, Orpington, Kent, BR5 2NT  
Tel: 01689 876112  
Email: [fran.godfrey@uk.pwc.com](mailto:fran.godfrey@uk.pwc.com)

**Wales**, Mr D Garrett, 69 Blaendare Road,  
Pontypool, Gwent, NP4 5RU, Tel: 01633 875404,  
Email: [davejgarrett@aol.com](mailto:davejgarrett@aol.com)

**Wales**, Mrs J Jessop, Broad Eaves, Chepstow  
Road, Langstone, Newport, Gwent, NP18 2JP,  
Tel: 01633 412860,  
Email: [jenniferjessop@aol.com](mailto:jenniferjessop@aol.com)